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# The Friday Letter

Vol. 8 No. 5

March 4, 1988

## On the Hill



Assistant Secretary John W. Bode testified, February 24, on the Food and Nutrition Services' efforts to meet the food and nutrition needs of low-income Americans. The hearing was held before the Subcommittee on Domestic Marketing, Consumer Relations, and Nutrition of the House Committee on Agriculture and the Domestic Task Force of the House Select Committee on Hunger.

In his remarks, Bode made the following points:

. FNS' program efforts to meet the food assistance needs of the hungry and homeless are substantial and vigorous. The network of food assistance programs we now have was a long time in making, and it has passed the test of changing circumstances. Using these programs, we need to continue the improvement of benefit targeting and program administration.

. As we consider ways to reshape food assistance, we need the benefit of state experiments in the broad context of welfare reform.

. We should view the federal budget deficit reality as a stimulus to better integration of federal, state, local, and private nutrition assistance efforts.

. We know that program complexity is a prime factor causing payment error, and we need to avoid adding to our already serious payment error rate problem in the Food Stamp Program by further complicating that program.

. We should avoid the trap of expecting food assistance programs to solve problems in housing or broader health issues. Such unrealistic expectations will inevitably lead to wasted effort and disappointment.

Others testifying included:

- . Bishop John Ricard, Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore, U.S. Catholic Conference;
- . Representative Bruce Vento (D-MN);
- . Representative Don Edwards (D-CA);
- . Representative James Jeffords (R-VT);
- . Mayor Sidney Barthelemy of New Orleans, Conference of Mayors;
- . Marian Wright Edelman, Children's Defense Fund;
- . Robert Fersht, FRAC;
- . Philip Worth, Second Harvest; and
- . Ellen Haas, Public Voice

-Story by Frank Ippolito  
Governmental Affairs Staff

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## Food and Nutrition Magazine "Just Says No"

In support of the President and First Lady's anti-drug campaign, the January issue of Food and Nutrition magazine is devoted to "Just Say No." The issue includes a variety of articles that illustrate ways local communities and federal and state agencies are helping children and young adults stay away from drugs.

The issue, which opens with a letter from First Lady Nancy Reagan, is being distributed to key food program cooperators throughout the country. Copies are also being given to the Secretary's office, the White House,

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the Department of Education, members of USDA's "Just Say No" task force, and to FNS regional offices for use in their anti-drug efforts.

In putting together the issue, the public information staff looked for examples of how people involved with food assistance programs are helping with drug prevention and education. From across the country, they found WIC nutritionists, school food service directors, nutrition educators, food stamp workers, and others who are helping through their jobs and sometimes through volunteer work on their own.

The issue's lead article tells what "Just Say No" is all about--how it got started, how "Just Say No" clubs get kids involved, and how USDA is playing a key role in the federal government's response.

Other articles in the issue show how:

- o Some new partnerships between schools and private companies are helping get the message to children through special efforts, such as printing specially designed milk cartons for use in school lunch programs.

- o Communities are fighting drug abuse through innovative programs that bring together parents, teachers, students, and civic leaders.

Linda L. Boling  
Editor, Public Information Staff

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- o Drug rehabilitation centers, like New Jersey's Damon House, are helping young people put their lives back together through counseling, training, and work programs.

- o Health professionals, including local WIC staff, are teaching young mothers about the dangers of smoking and using drugs or alcohol during pregnancy.

- o Special projects, like conferences and poster contests, are encouraging kids to become peer group leaders and reach other kids with the anti-drug message.

- o Local groups, like the Penobscot Indians, are tailoring drug prevention activities to individual needs and giving children creative alternatives to using drugs.

Articles and photos for the issue were contributed by FNS Public Information Staff in headquarters and the regional offices.

-Story by Jan Kern  
Public Information Staff

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## Audit System Keeps Pace

Jerry Stankorb of the Mountain Plains Special Nutrition Programs staff has computerized the tracking of audits with a spread-sheet program he developed about 3 years ago. The system replaces the former hand-logging procedure and makes a more compact, easy-to-use file.

Using the computer, Stankorb can produce a simple printout that becomes a permanent record after audits are closed. The printout shows dollar amounts assessed and collected, dates at which various stages are reached, and a comparison between years or between states.

-Story by Joanne Widner  
MPRO Public Affairs Staff

## FNS Kicks Off Black History Month

American blacks must take the lead in defining a new image of themselves, a Washington journalist told an audience at the February 4 kickoff of FNS' Black History Month observance.

In keeping with this year's theme, "The Constitutional Status of Afro-Americans into the 21st Century," Angela Owens of WRC-TV opened with her ideas of what Black History Month is all about: recognizing the contributions of Afro-Americans and acknowledging how American society has been enriched by those contributions; correcting some willful distortions of historians regarding the role Afro-Americans have played in building this Nation and in fueling its progress; and using education to clear a way through the fears that exist between races.



Owens said the constitutional status of black Americans fits right in with her line of work because it relates to the importance of images. How Afro-Americans are perceived as America struggles toward equal opportunity and equal access for all citizens is very important, Owens said. Praising the accomplishments of the past, Owens nonetheless expressed concern that

equal opportunity and equal access is still a goal denied. "Now why is this?" she asked. "Why is it that the belief still exists that if Afro-Americans were truly given the opportunity and equal access, there would be no room left for other people?" The answer, she said, "is fear."

Owens told about a minister who defines fear as failed education accepted as reality. She said that for Americans this failed education, where Afro-Americans are concerned, is made up of myths and images.

"One of the solutions," she said, "is clearly to properly educate to destroy the myths and correct the images. But we have been in that process of reeducating ourselves as a Nation for a very long time. . .since the 14th Amendment in 1868."

"If the images of Afro-Americans are ever to be corrected," Owens said, "Afro-Americans must take the lead. We must define ourselves for ourselves and for everyone else. We must determine who we are and how we'd like to be viewed."

"But," she said, "no one else should feel threatened by this. One people's attempt to love itself and lift itself up does not mean that any other people must be put down."

In closing, Owens said, "Until the myths are destroyed and the images corrected, they will exist in the very soul of this Nation, lurking collectively as one of the last barriers to equal opportunity and equal access. And, collectively, those myths and images will work to stunt the constitutional status of Afro-Americans long into the 21st century. If the Constitution works poorly for some, it really works poorly for all."

Owens has more than 17 years of experience in broadcasting. She joined WRC-TV in 1972, after spending 2 years with NBC as Capitol Hill correspondent.



## Pennsylvania Students "Just Say No"

Students at John S. Clarke Elementary School in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, learned the meaning of "Just Say No" during a week-long drug awareness project. MARO's Bob Freiler and Joe Dunphy, who visited the school, both said they were impressed by the scope of the project.



Bob Freiler, MARO SNP director, is pictured above with some students and an unidentified teacher from John S. Clarke Elementary School.

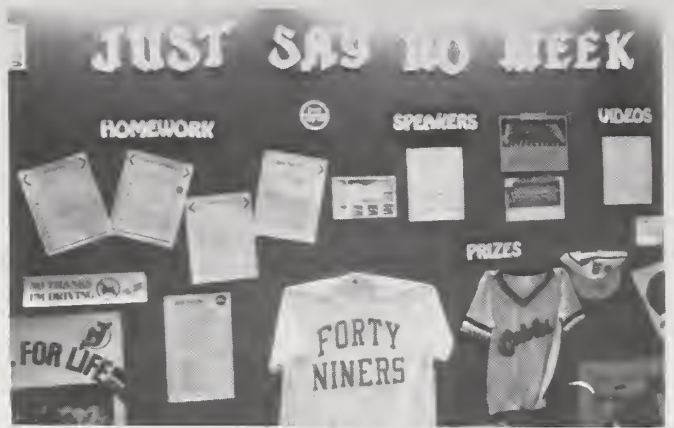
The Clark faculty incorporated lessons on drug and alcohol abuse into the students' regular curriculum. Students wrote letters to breweries, distilleries, and drug companies asking for their viewpoints on drug and alcohol abuse. They presented plays on drug and alcohol awareness, saw videos, and heard speakers on the subject.

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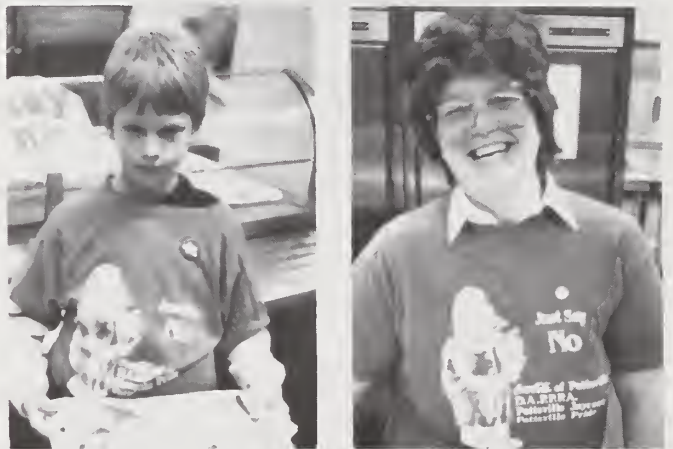
She was appointed WRC's editorial director in October 1984. Owens studied broadcast journalism at Columbia University in New York City. She holds a bachelor of arts degree in English literature and philosophy from Eastern College in St. Davids, Pennsylvania.

-Story by Linda Boling  
Public Information Staff



Bulletin boards display project memorabilia for students, staff, and visitors to review.

The school staff also involved the community in its effort. Area businesses donated Officer McGruff "Just Say No" T-shirts and other prizes that children won during the week. Students compiled information packets that they took to their parents.



A school lunchroom worker and a student show off T-shirts with the "Just Say No" slogan.

The highlight of the week was a letter First Lady Nancy Reagan sent congratulating them on their efforts to promote drug awareness.

-Story and Photos by  
MARO Public Affairs Staff

# Food Programs Participation Update

Following are preliminary estimates of participation in the Federal-State food assistance programs for the month of December with comparisons to the previous month and to the same month of last year.

	<u>Dec. 1986</u>	<u>Nov. 1987</u>	<u>Dec. 1987 2/</u>
<u>Food Stamp Program: 1/</u>			
People participating (mil.) .....	19.3	18.4	18.5
Value of bonus coupons (\$ mil.) .....	888.5	927.5	928.4
Average bonus per person .....	\$ 46.06	\$ 50.38	\$ 50.19
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	983.7	1,029.1	1,030.0
<u>National School Lunch Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.) .....	90.2	90.6	90.6
Children participating (mil.) .....	24.2	24.6	24.4
Children reached with free or reduced price lunches (mil.) .....	11.7	11.7	11.6
Percentage of lunches served free .....	41.4	40.5	40.4
Percentage of lunches served at reduced price .....	6.8	6.7	6.7
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	285.9	338.2	287.2
<u>School Breakfast Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.) .....	37.4	38.7	38.7
Children participating (mil.) .....	3.6	3.8	3.7
Percentage of breakfasts served free or at reduced price .....	88.4	87.5	87.3
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	38.9	48.6	38.9
<u>Child Care Food Program:</u>			
Number of meals served in centers (mil.) .....	32.7	36.1	33.9
Number of meals served in homes (mil.) .....	24.2	25.8	26.6
Percentage of all meals served free .....	78.3	78.2	78.5
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	42.2	47.6	46.3
<u>Special Supplemental Food Program (WIC):</u>			
People participating (mil.) .....	3.4	3.5	3.5
Food cost (\$ mil.) .....	109.9	115.6	117.5
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	137.1	135.1	153.1
<u>Commodity Supplemental Food Program: 3/</u>			
People participating (thous.) .....	136.2	159.6	158.6
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	2.5	2.7	2.7
<u>Food Distribution to Indians and Needy Families:</u>			
Number of projects in operation .....	106	106	106
People participating (thous.) .....	143.3	139.1	139.3
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	4.5	4.2	4.2
<u>Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program:</u>			
Total USDA cost (\$ mil.) .....	68.4	70.4	69.7

1/ Puerto Rico has been excluded from all months.

2/ Data collected as of February 24, 1988.

3/ Includes data for Commodity Elderly as of January 1987.



## Job Opportunities

JOB TITLE	AREA OF CONSID.	SERIES	GRADE	CLOSING DATE	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION
o Clerk Stay in School	(A)	GW-303	1/2	Open	88-SIS	FNS
o Clerk Typist	(L)	GS-322	2/3/4	Open until Filled	NONE	FNS
o Secretary Typing	(A)	GS-318	4/5/6	Open Continuous	88-999	FNS
o Supvy Pers Stfg & Class Spec1st	(U)	GM-201	14	03/14/88	88-10	PED
o Program Analyst*	(A)	GS-345	12/13	03/14/88	88-11	OAE
o Food Tech/Nutr (Prom Pot to GS-12)	(A)	GS-1382/630	11	03/21/88	88-12	NTSD
o Secretary Typing	(FNS-H)	GS-318	6/7	03/08/88	88-13	ARD
o Secretary Typing	(FNS-H)	GS-318	5	03/08/88	88-14	OGAPI
o Secretary Typing**	(G)	GS-318	6	03/28/88	88-15	BRD
o Spvy Comp Prog Anal	(FNS-H)	GM-334	14	03/24/88	88-16	IRMD
o Food Prog Spec (Prom Pot to GS-11)	(FNS-H)	GS-120	7/9	03/28/88	88-17	PAD
o Food Prog Spec (Prom Pot to GS-11)	(A)	GS-120	7	03/28/88	88-17A	PAD
o Food Prog Spec (Prom Pot to GS-11)	(A)	GS-120	9	03/28/88	88-17B	PAD
o Secretary Typing**	(G)	GS-318	7	03/28/88	88-18	BRD
o Spvy Food Prog Spec**	(FNS-N)	GM-120	14	03/28/88	88-19	BRD
o Spvy Comp Prog Anal	(FNS-H)	GM-334	14	03/24/88	88-20	IRMD
o Spvy Nutritionist***	(A)	GM-630	13	04/04/88	88-H-4	HNIS

\* Full Time or Part Time, 16-32 Hours/Week

\*\* New Positions

\*\*\* Reannounced - Those who previously applied need not reapply in order to be considered.

### Office Location

ARD - Administrative Review Division  
 BRD - Benefit Redemption Division  
 FNS - Food and Nutrition Service  
 IRMD - Information Resource Management Division  
 HNIS - Human Nutrition Information Service  
 NTSD - Nutrition and Technical Services Division  
 OAE - Office of Analysis and Evaluation  
 OGAPI - Office of Governmental Affairs and Public Information  
 PAD - Program Accountability Division  
 PED - Personnel Division

### Area of Consideration

(A) - All Sources  
 (FNS-H) - FNS Headquarters Wide  
 (FNS-N) - FNS Nationwide  
 (G) - Governmentwide  
 (L) - Local Commuting Area  
 (U) - USDA Wide